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# THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Entered as second-class matter November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 1, 1879

VOL. X

NEW YORK, JANUARY 22, 1917

No. 13

(Concluded from page 90)

When the teacher has gained some mastery of Latin quantities, and understands the structure of the Latin hexameter, what shall he do next? He should read Latin verses aloud, by the hundreds. How? Well, let the teacher work out in his own practice some scheme for himself, and stick to that, resolutely. But in doing this, he should keep certain principles in mind. Here again I shall state the obvious—the obvious that is, however, often overlooked.

Since verse is not prose, and since it is distinguished from prose by the greater part which rhythm plays in it, the first task is to bring out the rhythm. The six metrical accents—ictuses—of the Latin hexameter must, so far as is possible, be brought out, to the reader's own ear, if he has one, and to the ears of listeners. Here, some points of detail may be noted. Whatever may be one's *theory* of the nature of the ictus in Latin poetry, in *practice* he must treat ictus as *stress*. We can read verse, Latin or English, in no other way.

So let us forego the attempt to read Latin verse in some other way. Secondly, one may as well forego the attempt to 'count time' as he reads Latin hexameters. The theory that a long syllable had twice the time of a short will not work for any type of Latin verse, except the hexameter: it is not worth the effort to practice a metronome reading of the hexameter, for, to repeat, we must discard such a method the moment we pass to the reading of any other type of Greco-Roman verse<sup>8</sup>. In practising, it will do no harm, at first, to exaggerate the ictus-stress: it is easy enough, after one gets the swing of the verse, to discard such overemphasis.

Another point, of special importance, may be noted here. It is well known that, commonly, there is in the first four feet of the hexameter conflict between word-accent and ictus. Here, forgetting what I have elsewhere written on the subject, I say now, that, if the two cannot be maintained side by side, then the word-accent should yield to the metrical accent. We make word-accent surrender thus to ictus in our reading of English poetry: why not do so in Latin poetry?

Out of what has just been said flows another matter. As a result of the conflict of word-accent and ictus, the earlier half of the Latin hexameter not infrequently

seems to critical ears unmusical, if not more or less unmetrical. But this phenomenon is familiar enough in English verse. The point has been very well discussed in that admirable book, *English Verse*, by C. M. Lewis (Henry Holt and Company, New York, 1906). See Chapter I entire (1-18), and Chapter II (19-39).

What of elision? This matter has recently been treated anew, by Professors E. H. Sturtevant and R. G. Kent, in a paper, *Elision and Hiatus in Latin Prose and Verse*, *The Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 46.129-155. Professor Sturtevant gives the substance of this paper in *The Classical Journal* 12.34-43 (October, 1916), under the same title. Now, in the reading of Latin verse aloud, one may well refuse ever to 'elide'. I know perfectly well that he will, in such case, not be doing what the Romans did in this matter, but he will get results infinitely better than those got now by the process of crushing out entirely the elided syllable. He will get sense (see below), and he will get rhythm; the latter point I have proved by my own practice, and, far better evidence, by the fact that students who took part, under my direction, in performances of two Latin plays in Latin, and in no case crushed out the elided vowel, got, to other ears than mine, rhythm, rhythm unmistakable. It is easy enough to change from any other practice to this, that of refusing to elide at all. The present practice, followed by many, of completely eliding, is a foe to understanding of the original.

Again, in the reading of verse aloud, attention should be paid to bringing out the sense of the original. Here again is a platitude, but many persons seem never to have grasped the idea that a poet meant to be understood. They read line by line, stopping at the end of the verse, no matter how intimately the words at the end of that verse and those at the beginning of the next are associated in logic and syntax. This practice gives results as absurd as come from the current practice of singing hymns in Churches, when a (long) pause is made after each line, as absurd as the results that come from the practice of some organists of playing a refrain between stanzas which belong together in thought. To see its absurdity as applied to Latin one has only to read Horace, *Carmina* 2.6.1-2, with complete elision before *et*, the last word in each of these verses, and with a pause after the *et*!

Reading aloud helps in another matter, to many troublesome, that of the caesura. Here one may well

<sup>8</sup>See in T. D. Goodell, *Chapters on Greek Metric* (Scribner's, New York, 1902), the fine chapter entitled *Rhythmicus or Metricus* (6-57); Chapter I in Mr. Lewis's book, *English Verse*, mentioned below; and *THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY* 3. 12, Notes 1-2.

begin by noting that the Grammarians, as a rule, define caesura in a way which, while accurate enough, misleads. According to them, we have caesura whenever a word ends within a foot. It follows that we may have numerous caesuras—five or six—in a single verse. It would be better to think of caesura in one way only—as a pause conditioned either by the necessity of taking breath within the verse, or by a pause in the sense, or by both factors at once. In this sense, we have in many verses two caesuras; in some, even three. Next, many find trouble in the fact that, if they fix on a certain point in the verse as the proper place for the caesura, words which belong closely together in logic and syntax stand on opposite sides of the caesura. I found no light anywhere on this point until I read *Evangeline* through, several times, from end to end, aloud. I noted presently that in verse after verse I had, of necessity, from limitations of breath, or from the effort to give the sense, or from both causes together, made a caesural pause at points so set in the verse that words which belonged closely together in logic and syntax were on opposite sides of the caesura. I concluded that, since this was giving me no trouble in English, my vernacular, it would give no trouble to a Roman, who understood Latin as his vernacular: my task, then, was merely to come to know Latin better.

In the early part of this editorial I spoke of the extent to which the language of the poets is affected and determined by purely metrical considerations. These matters ought, it seems to me, to be brought to the attention of the secondary student of Vergil. It is a task easy of accomplishment if the pupil has received any sort of adequate training in the hexameter; if the teacher discharges this task well, he will inevitably deepen the respect and admiration of his pupils for Vergil, by giving them some conception of the difficulties which in matters of form Vergil met and overcame. Further, a teacher might compare, for his own good as well as his pupils', some of the best as well as some of the worst verses in Ennius with good in the Aeneid, and thereby make even the dullest of his pupils realize the gap between the hexameters that mark the beginnings and those that mark the culmination of that type of poetic form among the Romans. He might compare verses of Catullus and Lucretius, too, with verses of Vergil, to show what advances Vergil made over his immediate predecessors; and lastly, by setting Vergil's verses side by side with those of Lucan, Ovid, or even Juvenal, he might show how incapable any one else was, even with Vergil before him as a model, to duplicate Vergil's achievement. All this is in reality comparatively simple work, not involving understanding of the subject-matter of the works referred to, and likely to stimulate understanding and appreciation of metrical form. If the teacher has no time to do this with his pupils he should do it for himself. This study of the metrical form of the Aeneid will lead him to juster apprehension and appreciation of the Aeneid itself. It is true that Vergil loved, for their own sake, intricate

and unusual turns of expression; but it is also true that much that strikes one, at least at first, as disagreeable in the language of Vergil was forced upon him by conditions which, with all his marvelous skill, he was not able to overcome entirely. To realize, first, how ill-adapted the Latin language was, naturally, to the hexameter, to gain some conception of the history of this form of verse among the Romans, to appreciate, even if but faintly, how much Vergil achieved in his hexameters, must waken admiration for Vergil's powers as a poet.

C. K.

### THE ITINERARIES

Almost at the very beginning of Greek literature stands the line, *πολλῶν δ' ἀνδρῶπων ἶδεν ἄστυα*, 'he saw the cities of many men', and after this line comes the account of the travels of Odysseus to these same cities, our first itinerary. From the days of Homer there were Greek descriptions of travels, sometimes merely incidental to the author's theme, sometimes the most important part of his task. Pausanias, the industrious sightseer, who has been called an ancient Baedeker, is only the best-known of a long series of travellers who told of their journeys in Greece and of the marvels they had seen. The *Anabasis* of Xenophon and the *Anabasis* of Arrian give us full descriptions of travels in Asia. For Africa we have the Greek epitome of the story of the voyage of the Carthaginian Hanno, who in the fifth century B.C. founded a string of colonies along the west coast of the dark continent. There are a number of descriptions of the Red Sea and of the Indian Ocean, some depending on autopsy, others on hearsay and the writer's imagination. The cities a traveller would see along the coasts of the Mediterranean and of the Black Sea have been described several times. In fact, accounts of travels were so abundant that people finally began to parody them. Lucian's *True History* is a delightful take-off of some of the more fanciful travellers' tales. It leads us a journey of eighty days west of the Pillars of Hercules, to the moon, to the sun, to the Islands of the Blest, etc.

But it is not my intention to discuss all the writers of travels, Greek or Roman, or to give an outline of the history of travel or a summary of ancient geography. I would, however, like to call your attention to some late Latin documents which are called *Itineraria*, *Itineraries*, and to a few others very closely related to them, even though they do not actually bear the name *Itinerarium*.

On the Lago di Bracciano, about twenty-five miles north of Rome, are some hot sulphur springs which anciently were known as *Aquae Apollinares*. In 1852 their modern owners, the monks of a Jesuit monastery, noticed that the masonry about the mouth of the spring needed repairing. So they sent for a corps of Roman artisans and ordered them to remove the stonework, which had been placed there perhaps as early as the Etruscan period. Only a few feet below the normal level of the water the workmen came upon a layer of